Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1683 - November 13 2009

The following is a closed circuit advisory and not necessarily for air.

OK, you all know why I am here. Its almost fall and all the bills from summertime have been mounting up. And, as usual, there is really not very much left in the treasury to pay them.

Its always this way. During June, July and August, people are spending more time away from home. You are out camping or at a ball game. Maybe it's a concert or traveling on vacation. We all do it, but most of you also find a local repeater to listen to this weekly newscast no matter where you go.

Now think of this. Our expenses to bring you the news are the same no matter if you are listening on the road, on an HT or from your hamshack at home. Eventually the bills have got to get paid and that time has come.

Now that everyone back at home and into their fall and winter life schedule, we ask that you take a few moments to send a donation to the Amateur Radio Newsline support fund so that we can keep these newscasts coming your way. Making a contribution is only a mouse click away if you have Pay Pal. Just go to www.arnewsline.org and click on the button at the top of the page marked "Make Donation." Or you can send in a donation to the Amateur Radio Newsline Support Fund, Post Office Box 660937, Arcadia California, 91066.

Whichever way you choose, the all volunteer crew at the Amateur Radio Newsline will be eternally grateful.

Once again that's the Amateur Radio Newsline Support Fund, Post Office Box 660937, Arcadia California, 91066. Or by Pay Pal at www.arnewsline.org

For the Support Fund, I'm Andy Jarema, N6TCQ. Our newscast follows.

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The following is a QST. A new record down-under as hams use red light off clouds to cross the Bass Strait. Also, Indonesia announces that it will launch a rescue radio ham satellite, Finland and Norway say yes to 4 meter operation and an unlicensed broadcaster tries a truly unusual defense after being fined. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1683 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: NEW LED HAM RADIO LIGHT COMMUNICATIONS RECORD SET DOWN-UNDER

A new, non line-of-sight optical communications distance record of 288 km has been set down-under with a one-way transmission between two hams

transmitting with Light Emitting Diodes. Amateur Radio Newsline's Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, has the details:

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On the night of October 27th, Rex Moncur, VK7MO, and Joe Gelston,VK7JG, assisted by Paul Godden,VK7KPG, set a new one way non line-of-sight optical record of 288 km across Australia's Bass Strait. And they did this using red light scattered of the clouds.

VK7MO was on Mt. Liptrap in South Gippsland listening on his A-P-D based receiver. This while VK7JG and VK7KPG were on Mt. Horror in North-East V-K-7 transmitting with a 3 watt Luxeon LED transmitter. The signals from Mt. Horror were bounced off of some high altitude cirrus clouds estimated to have been at about 20,000 feet.

On the receiving end, the callsigns from Mt. Horror were decoded by VK7MO using a new program called Weak Signal Communicator. Weak Signal Communicator is actually a new front end for the Spectrum Lab audio analyzing application that has was recently created by David Smith,VK3HZ.

The experimenters also tried the WSJT decoding program developed a few years ago by Joe Taylor, K1JT. The sync signal was received at -30dB but unfortunately there were no decodes.

None the less. the possibility of bridging Bass Strait by optical communications using weak signal technology now been proven. A full report will be posted to the Radio and Electronics Association of Southern Tasmania website in the near future.

>From Los Angeles, I'm Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, reporting for the Amateur Radio Newsline.

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Only the inquisitive minds of radio amateurs could make a feat like this possible and doing it with relatively inexpensive gear. The U-R-L for the REAST website is http://reast.asn.au/optical.php   (VK7TW)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: INDIANOSIA TO LAUNCH RESCUE RADIO HAMSAT

Indonesia is planning a rescue radio ham satellite. Amateur Radio Newsline's Jerry Gaul, KE7GGV, reports:

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The Bernama dot com on line newspaper reports that the Indonesian Amateur Radio Organization called Orari and the Indonesian National Institute of Aeronautic and Space plan to launch the ham radio bird next year. But so far the president of the Orari has not revealed the satellite's size nor its orbital distance from Earth.

According to the website, the new ham radio bird will be used to expand

the nations ham radio communication network to remote districts. It went on to note that the satellite will play a major role in linking land, sea and air communication for rescue radio operations.

The article also noted that ham radio operators from Orari had become the alternative communication tool. This, during disasters like the tsunami in Aceh and the recent earthquake in Padang.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Jerry Gaule, KE7GGV, in Albany, Oregon, reporting.

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You can read the entire story on-line at
http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsgeneral.php?idE31790
(Bernama.com)

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RESTRUCTUTRING: FINLAND ALLOWS LIMITED 4 METER ACCESS

Amateurs in Finland, as well as the separate DXCC entities of Aaland Island and Market Reef, can now operate in 70.000 to 70.175 MHz and 70.225 to 70.300 MHz. But a report on the Four Meters web site by OZ2M says that 4 meter operation is not permitted within the 13 border municipalities. Also, that transmissions within 50 km of the Russian border are only permitted with the antenna's main lobe pointed away from that nation. A maximum transmission power is limited to 25 watts within 50 km of the Norwegian border will also be enforced.

But there is some good news on the 6 meter front. This as hams residing in Finnish coastal areas are now free for 50 MHz operations which were previously forbidden due to former Swedish Channel 2 television broadcasting.   (OH1ZAA, via UKSMG Announcement)

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RESTRUCTURING: NORWAY GIVES HAMS 4 METERS

And Norway has joined Finland in giving its radio amateurs limited access to 70 MHz operation. As of November 5th hams in Norway plus those on Svalbard, Bear Island, Jan Mayen, Bouvet Island, Peter I Island and in the Norwegian land areas on Antarctica can run up to 100 watts in five small subbands on the 4 meter band.

But Norway's restructuring of its hamband allocations does not end there. In addition to the new 70 MHz allocation Norwegian radio amateurs have also gained new bands at 500 kHz and 5.2 MHz as well as a 150 kHz. They have also been granted an extension to the 24 MHz band

In addition to 135.7 to 137.8 kHz and 7.1 to 7.2 MHz, Norwegian amateurs can now use 493 to 510 kHz on secondary basis at 100 watts using Morse only. Also added were allocations at 5 dot 260 to 5dot 410 MHz on secondary basis and 24 dot 740 to 24 dot 890 MHz, also on secondary basis.

The complete Norwegian Amateur Radio Regulations in Google translated English are at tinyurl.com/NorwayRadioRegs. (Southgate)

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AWARD CONFLICT: C91VM QSL 'S FOR RECENT IOTA REJECTED

Hams planning to claim Islands on the Air credit for October 2009 contacts with C91VM are being told that these three operations will not be accepted for IOTA accreditation. This, because of the operator's current published QSL card policy.

According to G3KMA the operator of the expeditions has been notified that a policy change must be made that states that the request of 5 dollars in U-S currency is not obligatory. Also, IOTA award sponsors want a promise that cards sent direct to C91VM with sufficient return postage will be answered direct and in a timely fashion.

According to the November 7th release, a prompt amendment to this QSL policy notice as posted on QRZ.com is required if accreditation is to be reconsidered. (G3KMA)

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BREAK 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the South Coast Amateur Radio Club repeater serving Los Angeles from Palos Verdes California.

(5 sec pause here)

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RESCUE RADIO: I.T. HAM SPEARHEADS RESCUE RADIO TECHNOLOGY

An interesting article in Computerworld Magazine is certain to get some in the field of Information Technology thinking seriously about amateur radio. The title is ï¿½Want to bone up on wireless tech? Try ham radio' and Jim Linton, VK3PC, has the story behind the story:

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The article centers on John Hays K7VE, an IT Manager in Washington who devotes most of his spare time to help develop a communications system designed to integrate portable two-way radios with the global telephone network. He hopes to create a failure-proof voice communications infrastructure that can immediately connect first responders with the outside world, even when their own mobile cell phones are put out of service during an emergency.

The article points out that being a radio amateur he has access to abundant spectrum resources in which to engage his passion for research

and wireless experimentation. John K7VE attributes his ability to engage in such research would not be possible without being part of the amateur radio community.

The article quotes him saying: ï¿½For IT professionals, ham radio can foster skills that are translatable into real-world wireless and wired networking applications.'

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Jim Linton VK3PC.

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The article includes information about ham licensing and a few sample theory test questions. A link to it can be found at http://tinyurl.com/ComputerWorldHamRadio) (WIA News)

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RESCUE RADIO: W6FOG SOON BACK OUT TO SEA

Hams following the news about Neil Hays, W6FOG, sailing trip will be pleased to hear he has recovered and plans to be back out to sea soon.

As of November 2nd, Neil had survived very bad weather and high seas along with hypothermia. According to reports the sea was so heavy his tow line to the Coast Guard cutter broke three times during the rescue.

Late word is that once back on the water his plans are to travel along the west coast to the Panama Canal and then through it into the Caribbean. According to his home page on QRZ dot com. W6FOGF hopes to contact over 2000 gridsquares using the ham radio satellites during the voyage. He will also be on H-F at 14.280, 7.280 and 3.980 MHz, The H-F frequencies will be monitored 24 hours a day. (Southgate)

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RADIO LAW: CONDO RESIDENTS WIN DECLATORY RULING TO KEEP TV ANTENNA

In an October 30th ruling, the FCC granted Constance and Daniel Lane of Palantine, Illinois a Declatory Ruling permitting them to put up a rooftop TV antenna. This, after the board of their homeowners association told them they could not do so. Amateur Radio Newsline's Frank Haas, KB4T, has the details:

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Constance and Daniel Lane had installed a television antenna on the roof of their townhome.   In their petition to the FCC they had sated that they own the deeded townhome with exclusive use of their roof .

Their homeowners association does not dispute this assertion. However, the association's rules require that antennas must be installed in the attic of a townhome and any deviation from this requirement must be approved by the Board of Directors.

But an exception in this rule exists where an owner cannot get an usable signal with an antenna in the attic. The Lane's allege that they cannot get an acceptable quality air signal in their attic and that therefore they have installed a roof mounted antenna.

In their petition to the FCC the Lane's stated that the Association was imposing continuing fines with respect to this installation. Because of this they requested the Commission to prohibit the association from enforcing its rule. The homeowners association was aware that the Lanes had taken the matter to the FCC but never filed any response.

In granting the Lane's petition the FCC weighed heavily on its own Over-the-Air Reception Devices Rule. This is the 1996 law which prohibits governmental and private restrictions that impair the ability of antenna users to install, maintain, or use over-the-air reception devices. It applies to satellite antennas that are one meter or less in diameter and, as in the Lane's case, to antennas designed to receive over the air television broadcast signals.

In granting the Lane's the request the FCC noted that by declining to oppose the petition, the homeowners association has failed to carry its burden. It therefore concluded that the Lane's antenna installation on their roof is permissible under the Commission's Rule as well as the homeowners association's rules.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Frank Haas, KB4T, in Holly Hill, Florida.

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At airtime its unknown if the homeowners association plans to file an appeal. (FCC)

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RADIO LAW: PHILADELPHIA CELL BAN COULD IMPACT MOBILE HAMS

Operating a two-way radio mobile in Philadelphia may cost you $75 a pop beginning December 1st. This, thanks to a new cell phone law about to fully take effect in that city.

While the purpose of the law is to discourage the use of cell phones while driving there is a clause which prohibits the use of a wireless communication device for voice communication while operating a motor vehicle on any Philadelphia street. Hands free operation is permitted.

An article in the Philadelphia Inquirer quotes a 9th District Police Officer saying there are some exceptions to the new law. These are to call the 911 emergency line or while using a two-way radio to conduct official business for the city, state, or federal government. Otherwise the law says to pull over and put the car in park or neutral before making a call.

Local hams have been in touch with ARRL Volunteer Counsel to get their opinion of the bill. More information can be found in the Holmesburg Amateur Radio Club November newsletter at www dot harcnet dor org.

Updates on the how this new law will affect on ham radio will be posted there as well. (WA3PZO)

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RADIO BUSINESS: PANASONIC TO BUY SANYO

Panasonic Corp. will make formal its takeover bid for rival Sanyo Electric. This, as part of a move by Japan's largest consumer electronics company to transform itself into a green energy supplier as well.

Panasonic says that it has received sufficient assurance from regulators around the world to proceed with the $4.45 billion deal. If approved it would place Panasonic a strong position in the solar panel, fuel cell and rechargeable battery areas. All three are important to the future of both broadband and radio communications advancement. (Shoptalk)

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HOLIDAY HAM RADIO: OH9SCL FROM SANTA CLAUS LAND

Ham radio will again be active from Santa Clause Land in the arctic Circle. This as station OH9SCL will takes to the holiday airwaves during the month of December. Plans are to have the station operational on 160 through 10 meters using CW, SSB and the digital modes. QSL's go via OH9UV. (Via e-mail)

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HOLIDAY HAM RADIO: OPERATION SANTA CLAUS INVITE

And speaking about the upcoming ham radio holiday season, this note to those clubs and groups planning an on-the-air Operation Santa Claus. The event aimed at bringing some of the holiday joy to hospitalized youngsters.

For those not aware, Operation Santa Claus is a helping hand event begun by April Mell, WA6OPS, more than two decades ago. This, when she was an Occupational Therapist at a hospital in Orange County, California. Being an active radio amateur she came up with the idea of using ham radio to let hospitalized youngsters chat for a moment with the man with the white beard wearing the red suit. Usually that Santa is a ham somewhere on the hospital premises who has both a love of children and that great Santa laugh.

Anyhow, it was only a few short years before her Operation Santa Claus idea was being copied by radio clubs nationwide and eventually worldwide. For some clubs, it has become an annual way for them to provide a very special service to their community.

If you or your group are planning an Operation Santa Clause event this holiday season, please let us know the date, time and the hospital that you will be serving. Also tell us who will be your Santa and whom his radio equipped helpers will be so that they can be given the

recognition that they deserve. If you do this, then we will do our best to get that information out to the rest of the world-wide ham radio community. (ARNewsline(tm))

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HAM HAPPENINGS" HAM RADIO UNIVERSITY 2010 IN NY ON JANUARY 10th

The eleventh annual Ham Radio University held in conjunction with the ARRL New York City/Long Island ARRL Section Convention on Sunday, January 10, 2010. The venue will be Briarcliffe College in Bethpage, New York.

For those not aware, Ham Radio University is a day to learn and experience the many aspects of amateur radio. The theme this year is Digital Communications and so far more than fifteen seminars are already scheduled. There will also be a VE session for those who would like to take an FCC exam and Special Event Station W2V set up and operational on HF.

Ham Radio University 2010 is sponsored this year by the Great South Bay Amateur Radio Club and is a cooperative effort between over twenty clubs and organizations in the New York City- Long Island area. More information is on-line at www.HamRadioUniversity.org   (K2DO)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: FLYING TO THE HUNTSVILLE HAMFEST WILL BE EXPENSIVE IN 2010

If you are planning to fly to next summers Huntsville Hamferst, you had best start saving for the trip right now. This is because New federal statistics show Huntsville has the nation's most expensive airplane ticket to purchase from anywhere.

A report from the Bureau of Transportation Statistics shows the average domestic airfare for the north Alabama city cost $471 in the second quarter of this year. That's $68 higher than the second-place city, Grand Rapids, Mich. Atlantic City, New Jersey, had the lowest average cost for an airplane ticket, at $185.

None of the prices include extra charges like bag fees. The statistics are for one-way and round-trip tickets. (Online Travler)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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WORLDBEAT: UK GETS ITS FIRST 6 TO 10 METER REPEATER

Turning to news from across the Atlantic, word that the Wessex Repeater Group in the United Kingdom has announced that telecommunications regulator Ofcom has approved for immediate operation the UK's first 6 to 10 meter cross-band repeater. GB3WX will be co-sited with the 2m voice repeater GB3JB in South Wiltshire. The system, when not being used as a repeater, will transmit a beacon signal enabling those interested in propagation to directly compare signals between 6 and 10 meters. This is because both the 10 meter and 6 meter radios will transmit with the same ERP using the same dual-band omni-directional antenna system, and enabling direct comparisons to be made. More is on-line at the group's web site: http://twxrg.web.googlepages.com/home (GB2RS)

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WORLDBEAT: EUROPE HAS NEW PC FOR THE ELDERLY

A new desktop PC aimed at people aged over 60 who are unfamiliar with Personal Computers and the internet has been unveiled in the United Kingdom. Called Simplicity, the simplified desktop has only six buttons directing users to basic tasks such as e-mail and chat.

The Simplicity computer has no log-in screen when it starts up, contains no drop-down menus and comes pre-loaded with 17 video tutorials. The operating system is a version of Linux that can be customized by users.

So far the SimplicITy computer system is only available in the Europe. According to the BBC story introducing it, more than 6 million people in the UK over the age of 65 have never used the internet, according to British government figures. (ScienceOnLine)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: AMSAT - NA CREATES STUDENT MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

AMSAT North America now has a new category of membership aimed at the younger set. During the November 3rd board meeting a motion to add a student membership category was unanimously approved. The student membership will cost one half of the current membership.

The approved motion reads in part that to expand its educational outreach efforts, AMSAT-North America is establishing a student category of membership. The yearly dues will be half the standard applicable rate, and shall be available to all students in primary and secondary schools. Also, post-secondary school students enrolled in classes at least half of the time will also be eligible for a maximum of 6 post-secondary years in this membership category. Any student membership application should indicate the school being attended, the course of study and the expected graduation date. (ANS)

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ON THE AIR: TUBE / VALVE QRP OPERATING DAY NOVEMBER 15

On the air, word that Tube or Valve Radio QRP Day takes place on Sunday November 15 from 1600 until 2359 UTC. Originated in the United Kingdom, the basic idea is to communicate using tube or valve based equipment that was popular a generation ago.

Tube or Valve Radio QRP Day limits itself to a power level of 5 watts or less, usually using separate receivers and transmitters. However planners note that vintage higher power rigs throttled back to 5 watts or below are fine.

This event is not a contest. Rather this is a celebration of ham radio in days gone by,. As such, its planners suggest that those taking part try and send some slow CW. They add that if you are a bit shaky to have the hot shot stations slow down for you.

There is one warning we want to pass along to those not familiar with tube or valve based radio gear. All of it uses voltages that can harm or even kill you if you come in contact with it. If you have never played with this type of equipment, please at least partner with someone who has and is aware of the safety precautions that must be taken.

Lastly, if you do decide to take part, please send any reports and photographs by e-mail to g3vtt at aol dot com before November 20th. More on this event is on-line at www.gqrp.com (G3VTT)

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DX

In DX, word that DL7DF and some of his friends will operate from Phu Quoc Island through November 17th. Two stations are operational. One is concentrating on CW and SSB with the other operating RTTY, PSK31 and SSTV. QSL via DL7DF either direct or via the DL QSL Bureau.

An international team is heading to Samoa and will be operating portable 5W through November 17th. Their announced plans are to have two stations including amplifiers for all-band activity. QSL as directed on the air.

KL7JR reports that plans are underway for the activation of Jacquot Island before and during ARRL's December 11th to the 13th Ten Meter Contest. Listen out for VY1RST to concentrate on 10 meters for the contest and 14.260 for non-contest activities. QSL via KL7JR at his callbook address.

AA7JV, and HA7RY are reportedly active as TX3A from the Chesterfield Islands. They are expected to be there for at least another two weeks with priorities given to operating on 160, 80 and 40 meters. They will also try to make time the contacts on the higher bands as time permits. Updates can be found at www.tx3a.com. QSLs via the bureau or direct. E-QSL and Logbook to the World are also being accepted.

EI6DX, will be operational from Somone Senegal through November 16th.

He plans to focus on the lowbands and CW. QSL via bureau or direct to RX3RC.

Lastly, T30KI and Mike,T30IW are expected to show up from Abatao Islet on the Tarawa atoll working CW and SSB on 60 through 6 meters/ This, from November 10th to the 16th. QSLs for both calls go via N1EMC.

(Above from various DX news sources)

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ENFORCEMENT: TEXAS REALLY IS A STATE AND YOU NEED AN FCC LICENSE TO BROADCAST THERE

And finally this week an enforcement story with a novel twist. This as an unlicensed broadcaster who tried to use the United States Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act as his reason not to have an FCC license is now facing a $10,000 fine. Amateur Radio Newsline's Jim Hendershot, WA6VQP, has the details:

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By way of background, on February 22nd 2007, the Dallas FCC Office issued a Notice of Unlicensed Operation to Raymond Frank. It warned him that the radio transmissions on 100.1 MHz from his residence were not authorized by the Commission. The letter also outlined the possible penalties for continued unlicensed operation. On March 5th 2007, the Dallas Office received a reply from Mr. Frank stating that the transmissions had ceased.

But the matter did not end there. On July 22nd 2009, in response to a complaint about an unlicensed radio station in the Austin area, FCC agents traced the signal to Frank's home. So on August 13th 2009, the Houston FCC Office issued a Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture to Frank in the amount of $10,000 for the apparent willful and repeated violation of Section 301 of the Communications Act.

Raymond Frank submitted his responses to the proposed fine that seemed to be based on a law called the United States Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act. This is the code that lets foreign delegates to the United States get away with such things as double-parking and then ignoring the ticket on their car. But it seems as if Raymond Frank was trying to invoke it in his defense whether he knew the law applied or not. Here's why:

In his response to the proposed fine, Frank claimed that the Commission had no jurisdiction over the matter. He asserted that as a citizen of the Republic of Texas, he was not subject to the laws of the United States or the Commission's Rules. Specifically, he claimed that the Commission lacks jurisdiction over his actions, because he operated a radio station solely within the boundaries of the state of Texas. He also claimed that the Commission's licensing policies violate the First Amendment of the constitution.

As you might expect, the FCC did not buy his defense. In affirming the fine the FCC noted that Section 301 of the Communications Act

explicitly sets forth the Commission's jurisdiction over all radio transmissions, both interstate and intrastate. It also states that no person shall use or operate any apparatus for the transmission of energy or communications or signals by radio from one place in any state to another place in the same state, or from one place within a state to another state without a license. Thus, contrary to Raymond Frank's assertion, the Commission does indeed have full jurisdiction over the use of radio transmitting equipment within the state of Texas and it was invoking that jurisdiction in his case.

The FCC also noted that the U.S. Supreme Court has repeatedly held that there is no constitutional right to use radio facilities without a license. It said that issuing a forfeiture for operating a radio station without a license simply represents the enforcement of the Communications Act, and as such it is not some abridgment of Mr. Frank's Constitutional rights.

In summary, the FCC said that it had examined Mr. Frank's response to the proposed fine in conjunction with the Forfeiture Policy Statement. As a result of its review, the FCC said that it finds no basis for cancellation or reduction of the $10,000 fine proposed for this violation.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline. I'm Jim Hendershot, WA6VQP, in Grants Pass, Oregon.

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The bottom line: Whether or not Raymond Frank recognizes the authority or jurisdiction of the FCC does not matter. Right now he has only 30 days from the date the order was issued to pay up or to file a further appeal. (FCC)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Don Carlson, KQ6FM in Reno, Nevada, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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